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United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, AFL-CIO  
P. O. Box 54      609 N. Flores  
Rio Grande City, Texas      Phone: 487-2995

November 12, 1966

Hon. John Connally, Governor of Texas  
Hon. Waggoner Carr, Attorney General  
State Capitol  
Austin, Texas

Dear Governor Connally and General Carr:

On election day past, ten poverty-stricken farm workers who are on strike were jailed by Texas Rangers in Starr County for picketing in connection with their strike.

These ten have now been jailed for five days under subhuman conditions and they were jailed by Texas Rangers who are supervising the strike situation in Starr County.

The Texas picketing law under which these people have been jailed has been declared unconstitutional by the Texas Supreme Court since 1949. To the knowledge of the union, this law has not been applied to organized labor from 1949 to election day, November 8, 1966.

Furthermore, the ten strikers have been jailed for picketing at the Missouri Pacific Railroad, a clear case of secondary boycott charges, which are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the National Labor Relations Board. The State courts who are jailing these men have no jurisdiction in the case because the federal law governs. If anyone is really concerned about secondary picketing or secondary boycott, there is no need to have the Texas Rangers jail strikers. All that is necessary is to file charges before the National Labor Relations Board, which will then act quickly and efficiently to preserve the law.

The jailing of the strikers is pure intimidation. They will not abandon their strike no matter how many Texas Rangers arrest them.

The things happening in Starr County today are a throwback to anti-labor oppression of fifty years ago.

As chief executive officer of the State and as chief law officer of the State, you have control of what the Texas Rangers do. General Carr also has a labor desk in his office whose function it is to advise local officials concerning legal matters such as the present activities in Starr County.

United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, AFL-CIO respectfully but firmly demands that you exercise your powers and duties to stop this unlawful oppression of strikers in Starr County.

Yours truly,  
*Eugene Nelson*  
Eugene Nelson, Organizer  
UFWOC, AFL-CIO

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